

Message Text

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CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 3160

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT MILI ASEC LE

SUBJ: LEBANESE SITUATION: JUNE 8, 1978, 1600 HOURS LOCAL

REF: BEIRUT 3087 (DTG 051315Z JUN 78)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: ACCORDING TO AN NAHAR, THE GOL HAS DECIDED TO DELAY DEPLOYMENT OF THE LEBANESE ARMY TO SOUTH LEBANON. UN MIDDLE EAST COMMANDER SIILASVUO MET WITH LEBANESE OFFICIALS IN CONFIDENTIAL

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BEIRUT. FIJI SOLDIERS ARRIVED IN SOUTH LEBANON. PRIME MINISTER AL-HOSS VISITED HASBAYYA. THE LEBANESE FRONT ISSUED A STATEMENT DECLARING THAT ALL AGREEMENTS WITH THE PALESTINIANS WERE NULL AND VOID. GUNMEN ASSASSINATED A PHALANGE OFFICIAL IN THE NORTHERN LEBANESE TOWN OF SHIKKA. THE NATIONAL LIBERAL PARTY PAPER CRITICIZED THE SAUDI MAGAZINE FOR SAYING THE CHRISTIANS WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE 1975-76 FIGHTING. END SUMMARY.

2. DEPLOYMENT SOUTH DELAYED.

PRESIDENT SARKIS, PRIME MINISTER AL HOSS AND DEFENSE MINISTER BOUTROS MET TOGETHER ON JUNE 7 AND DECIDED TO DELAY DEPLOYMENT OF THE LEBANESE ARMY TO SOUTH LEBANON, AN NAHAR REPORTED. THEY NEVERTHELESS RE-EMPHASIZED THEIR DETERMINATION TO SEND THE ARMY SOUTH, THE PAPER SAID.

3. SIILASVUO VISITS BEIRUT.

A. UN MIDDLE EAST COMMANDER ENSIO SIILASVUO MET WITH LEBANESE OFFICIALS IN BEIRUT ON JUNE 6. ACCORDING TO AN NAHAR, SIILASVUO PUT THREE ISRAELI QUESTIONS TO THE LEBANESE: (1) WHAT IS TO BECOME OF THE "GOOD FENCE?", (2) WILL THE LEBANESE ALLOW THE PALESTINIANS TO RE-ESTABLISH THEIR BASES IN SOUTH LEBANON UNDER THE CAIRO AGREEMENT? AND (3) WHEN WILL THE LEBANESE ARMY DEPLOY SOUTH?

B. ACCORDING TO AN NAHAR, THE LEBANESE REPLIED THAT: (1) SECURITY COULD NOT BE MAINTAINED IF THE BORDERS REMAINED OPEN; (2) THE PLO HAD AGREED WITH THE GOL TO STOP OPERATIONS AGAINST ISRAEL FROM LEBANON; AND (3) NO DATE HAD BEEN SET FOR THE DEPLOYMENT SOUTH FOR THE LEBANESE ARMY.

C. ACCORDING TO OTHER PRESS REPORTS, SIILASVUO ALSO TOLD THE LEBANESE THAT ISRAEL WISHED TO RETAIN FOUR OUTPOSTS IN LEBANON AFTER JUNE 13. A KNOWLEDGEABLE UN SOURCE SAID SIILASVUO HAD PASSED ON NO SUCH MESSAGE, HOWEVER.

4. FIJI TROOPS ARRIVE.

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A CONTINGENT OF 200 FIJI SOLDIERS ARRIVED IN SOUTH LEBANON ON JUNE 7. ADDITIONAL SOLDIERS ARE EXPECTED IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS TO BRING THE TOTAL STRENGTH OF FIJI'S CONTINGENT TO OVER 500. ACCORDING TO A UN SPOKESMAN, THERE ARE NOW ABOUT 5,000 UN TROOPS IN SOUTH LEBANON, AND THE TOTAL WILL REACH 6,000 BY JUNE 13 AS ADDITIONAL TROOPS ARRIVE FROM FIJI, IRAN AND IRELAND.

5. LEBANESE FRONT STATEMENT.

THE LEBANESE FRONT MET JUNE 6 (WITHOUT THE PRESENCE OF FORMER PRESIDENT SULAYMAN FRANJIYAH) AND ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE WHICH THE NATIONAL LIBERAL PARTY PAPER AL AHRAR HAILED AS THE MOST IMPORTANT FRONT STATEMENT IN MORE THAN A YEAR. THE STATEMENT: --DECLARED THAT ALL AGREEMENTS WITH THE PALESTINIANS, INCLUDING LAST MONTH'S DOHA DECLARATION WERE NULL AND VOID; --DEMANDED A PROMPT END TO THE ARMED PALESTINIAN PRESENCE IN LEBANON; --CALLED FOR A NEW CHARTER GOVERNING REGULATIONS AMONG LEBANESE AND SAID THAT PARLIAMENT'S SIX POINT DECLARATION OF PRINCIPALS COULD SERVE AS THE CHARTER'S BASIS; --STRONGLY REJECTED THE PRINCIPLE THAT RELATIONS WITH THE PALESTINIANS SHOULD BE REGULATED ON THE DUAL BASIS OF MAINTAINING THE INTEREST OF THE PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE AS WELL AS GUARANTEEING

LEBANESE SOVEREIGNTY (SYRIAN PRESIDENT ASSAD HAD ENDORSED THIS PRINCIPLE, WHICH IS IN THE CAIRO AGREEMENT, AFTER HIS MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS IN LATAKIA LAST WEEK);
--SAID THAT AGREEMENTS WITH THE PALESTINIANS ARE INCONSISTENT WITH UNSC RESOLUTIONS 425 AND 426;
--SAID THE LEBANESE ARMY WHEN IT DEPLOYS SOUTH MUST USE THE COASTAL HIGHWAY THROUGH DAMOUR.

6. PRIME MINISTER AL HOSS VISITS SOUTH LEBANON.

PRIME MINISTER AL HOSS, INTERIOR MINISTER SALMAN AND OTHER OFFICIALS VISITED HASBAYYA AND NEIGHBORING VILLAGES IN SOUTH LEBANON ON JUNE 6. "WE CAME HERE TO RAISE THE BANNER OF THE LEBANESE STATE AGAIN," DR. HOSS TOLD THE CROWDS WHICH TURNED OUT TO GREET HIM.
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7. PHALANGE OFFICIAL ASSASSINATED.

TWO GUNMEN ENTERED A BANK IN THE NORTH LEBANESE TOWN OF SHIKKA AND SHOT DEAD ITS MANAGER, JUDE BAYIH, DEPUTY HEAD OF THE PHALANGE PARTY IN THE ZGHARTA-ZAWIYA REGION. THE PHALANGIST VOICE OF LEBANON IDENTIFIED THE KILLERS AS FUAD GABRIEL FRANJIYAH AND SIMON GABRIEL FRANJIYAH. THE KILLING HAS GREATLY INCREASED TENSION IN NORTH LEBANON IN THE WAKE OF RECENT GUN BATTLES THERE BETWEEN MEMBERS OF THE PHALANGE PARTY AND SUPPORTERS OF FORMER PRESIDENT SULAYMAN FRANJIYAH.

8. AL AHRAR CRITICIZES SAUDI ARTICLE.

AL AHRAR ON JUNE 6 CRITICIZED THE SAUDI MAGAZINE AL DAWAH FOR CARRYING AN ARTICLE CHARGING THE CHRISTIANS WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR STARTING THE 1975-1976 FIGHTING. AL AHRAR WONDERED IF THE ARTICLE HERALDED A BEGINNING OF A NEW SAUDI ATTITUDE TOWARD LEBANON.
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